METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR FACILITATING LOAD BALANCING ACROSS NAME SERVERS

ABSTRACT

One embodiment of the present invention provides a system that translates host names into Internet Protocol (IP) addresses. This system includes a plurality of name servers that are configured to translate host names into corresponding IP addresses. This system also includes a plurality of load balancers coupled to the plurality of name servers. Each of these load balancers is configured to receive requests for host name translations, and to distribute these requests between the plurality of name servers in order to balance load across the plurality of name servers. Note that these load balancers are configured to operate in parallel in distributing requests between the plurality of name servers. A variation on the above embodiment provides a system that performs failovers between a plurality of load balancers that are configured to balance requests for host name to IP address translations between a plurality of name servers. The system operates by sending a keep alive packet from a load balancer to a first neighboring load balancer, and then waiting for a response to the keep alive packet in order to determine if the first neighboring load balancer remains alive. If the first neighboring load balancer does not remain alive, the load balancer takes over servicing of translation requests directed to the first neighboring load balancer.

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